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SIPDIS

STATE FOR AF/W
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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#) [DOMESTICPOLITICS](#)

SUBJECT: ANOTHER OYO GOVERNOR DEFIES GODFATHER ADEDIBU

[1](#)1. SUMMARY: (U) Oyo Governor Alao-Akala's attempt to extend his tenure through legal action has reignited political tension in Oyo state. Lamidi Adedibu, Akala's political godfather, said Akala's action violates an agreement reached when Akala became governor in January, and has vowed to resist Akala's move. Adedibu has already proven successful in removing governors, having engineered the impeachment of Akala's predecessor. The Akala-Adedibu rift could set the stage for a power play similar to that which led to the impeachment creating the opening for Akala. End Summary.

[1](#)2. (U) On May 11 Oyo State Government filed suit with the Supreme Court seeking a constitutional interpretation of the governor's tenure, and the delay of any new gubernatorial elections until the question is decided. Governor Alao-Akala became governor in January following the impeachment of former Governor Rasheed Ladoja by the State House of Assembly. Akala hopes to exploit the constitutional ambiguity about gubernatorial terms to extend his tenure beyond 2007. The constitution stipulates a four-year term for state governors beginning from the day he/she takes the oath of office. However, it is silent regarding the tenure of a governor seated after another governor is impeached. The Oyo State Government also joined the current governors of Anambra and Bayelsa states in the suit since they took office under the same circumstances.

[1](#)3. (U) Akala's legal action reportedly infuriated his political patron, Lamidi Adedibu. Adedibu warned Akala when he became governor in January that he should only serve out the remaining term of former Governor Rasheed Ladoja, who was impeached following a disagreement with Adedibu. Adedibu told Akala not to seek reelection in 2007. Should Akala succeed in extending his term, the stage would be set for yet another political feud in Oyo State, with all eyes watching to see if Adedibu would seek Akala's impeachment, as he did with Ladoja when their relationship soured. Akala should not expect much help from the PDP or the Presidency. According to an Obasanjo insider, the President gave Akala warning when the latter assumed office. Obasanjo told the new governor not to cross Adedibu and to make sure he paid the old man proper respect in accordance with Yoruba tradition and given that Adedibu is the strongest politician in the state. It appears that a brief stint in the governor's chair has caused Akala to suffer a memory lapse.

[1](#)4. (SBU) Comment: Dramas such as this latest Akala-Adedibu affair appear to be nothing more than a test of who can pull the most strings to get their own way. This is only a taste of what is to come as 2007 approaches and people use any tool at their disposal to realize their electoral designs. End comment.

Browne